

11/2/09 - Monday, November 2, 2009

**CITY OF EAU CLAIRE
PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES**

Meeting of November 2, 2009

City Hall, Council Chambers

7:00 p.m.

Members Present: Messrs. Kayser, FitzGerald, Duax, Larson, Seymour

Staff Present: Messrs. Tufte, and Ivory

The meeting was chaired by Mr. Kayser

1. REZONING (Z-1456-09) " C-3 & I-1 to CBD, Putnam and Wisconsin Streets

Mr. Tufte provided an overview of a rezoning application initiated by the Plan Commission to rezone land from C-3 and I-1 to CBD located northwest and southwest of the intersection of Putnam Street and Wisconsin Street.

The Plan Commission initiated the rezoning of these properties after contacting the property owners to assure their interest in the change. The properties include a hotel, tavern, and parking lot.

The property at the northwest corner is a hotel with I-1 zoning. Hotels are a prohibited use in an I-1 district, which makes this hotel a nonconforming use. Rezoning this property to CBD would make the property a conforming use and the setbacks for the property would comply with CBD district standards.

The property at the southwest corner is a tavern with C-3 zoning. Taverns are a permitted use in a C-3 district. A CBD zoning of this property would be more consistent with the purpose of the zoning district stated in the Zoning Code. CBD zoning would also provide setbacks consistent with the actual placement of the building on the property and make it a conforming structure. The building is presently a nonconforming structure since it does not have a 20TM setback from a street required in a C-3 district. The CBD zoning would also make the tavern a conditional use and allow Plan Commission review of future expansions.

The property south of this tavern is a parking lot owned by Banbury and also has C-3 zoning. Again, a CBD zoning of this property would be more consistent with the purpose of these zoning districts as stated in the Zoning Code.

The North River Fronts Neighborhood Plan is applicable to this area and has no statements in it concerning the possible rezonings of these properties. The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map shows the area as being appropriate for medium- and high-density housing.

No one was present to speak on the application.

Mr. Dave FitzGerald moved to recommend approval of Z-1456-09. Mr. Duax seconded and the motion carried.

2. DISCUSSION/DIRECTION

A. Water Street Sign District

The Commission reviewed a letter from Ms. Nicole Kircher, owner of the Calista Salon, located at 840 Water Street. Ms. Kircher is requesting the Plan Commission to initiate an amendment to the City Sign Code to expand the Water Street Sign District to include her business and possibly the four other businesses located in the vicinity of the intersection of Water Street and Ninth Avenue.

Ms. Kircher is requesting to be included in the Water Street Sign District so that she could consider installing a projecting sign (sign placed perpendicular to the building wall). According to the current Sign Code, projecting signs are permitted in the Water Street and Downtown Sign Districts.

Ms. Kircher was present at the meeting indicating her support for the change.

The Plan Commission discussed the request and directed staff to contact the Water Street BID to inform them about the request, and determine if the BID would support the change. If the BID supports the change, then staff should schedule public hearings on the change. The Commission also discussed the standards for projecting signs and whether any changes should be considered to encourage the installation of more of this type of sign.

B. Code Compliance

Mr. Duax indicated that there are several properties along Starr and Western Avenues that are quite unsightly with outdoor storage of materials and parking of vehicles on unimproved surfaces. The property owners should be contacted to correct the situations.

C. Future Agenda Items

None

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of October 19, 2009, were approved.

Joseph Seymour, Secretary